

**SOURCE SELECTION DECISION
AWARD WITHOUT DISCUSSIONS
RFP SOL-CI-16-00058**

**PROGRAM SUPPORT, ANALYSIS, AND ADVANCEMENT OF TRANSPORTATION EMISSION
REDUCTION AND FUEL SAVINGS PROGRAMS**

1.0 DETERMINATION/SELECTION

I have determined that award of the contract resulting from Solicitation RFP SOL-CI-16-00058 will be made to Eastern Research Group (ERG) based on its highly rated technical proposal, and its fair and reasonable, and realistic cost-plus-fixed-fee (CPFF) amount. The findings below support this decision. In accordance with FAR 52.215-1, which was included in the Solicitation, the Government did not hold discussions.

2.0 FINDINGS

A. Background

This contract, when awarded, will be to provide the Office of Air and Radiation (OAR), Office of Transportation and Air Quality (OTAQ), Transportation and Climate Division (TCD), with the development and proliferation of existing and future regulatory compliance and voluntary air quality improvement programs.

A Cost-Plus-Fixed-Fee (CPFF), Level-of-Effort (LOE), term form contract is contemplated as a result of this solicitation. The solicitation was issued with full and open competition. The resultant contract is anticipated to consist of a twelve-month Base Period followed by four (4) twelve-month option periods. The maximum expiration date will be 2/28/2022.

B. Competition

1. A sources sought synopsis was issued on July 1, 2016 to determine if full and open competition was appropriate. (b)(5) responses were received. Only 1 firm was found capable of performing the work.

2. Diligent efforts were made to avoid restrictive criteria in the Request for Proposals (RFP). No firms indicated that the RFP was unduly restrictive.

3. The solicitation was publicly synopsized in FedBizOpps on October 25, 2016. The Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued on November 29, 2016 through FedBizOpps and FedConnect, with a due date for proposals of January 9, 2017. Two amendments to the solicitation were issued through FedBizOpps and FedConnect. on December 22, 2016. Amendment 0001 to the solicitation addressed technical questions received in response to the solicitation, revised the Technical Proposal Instructions, and provisions in sections K and L of the solicitation. Amendment 0002 to the solicitation extended the proposal due date to January 11, 2017.

C. Request for Proposal

One (1) offer was received by the 12:00 p.m. (EST) deadline on the proposal due date of January 11, 2017. A proposal was received from Eastern Research Group (ERG). The Technical

Evaluation Panel (TEP) was briefed on the procedures for conducting a technical evaluation, on January 5, 2017. The technical proposals were provided to the panel on January 11, 2017. The TEP Report (TEPR) was accepted by the Contracting Officer on February 6, 2017. The report is filed under Tab 53 of the solicitation file.

3.0 EVALUATION METHODS

Proposal Evaluation was consistent with the EPA Source Selection Guide (Appendix A to EPAAG 15.3.1) as set out in the solicitation.

For this solicitation, offerors were informed that all evaluation factors other than cost or price, when combined are significantly more important than cost or price (EPAAR 1552.215-71(a)). The proposal was evaluated in accordance with the technical evaluation criteria set forth in the provision at M-4 of the SOL, EPA-M-15-101 EVALUATION FACTORS FOR CONTRACT AWARD. The criteria were grouped into four categories of relative importance from most to least important, as provided below:

- (1) Criterion I 'Technical Capability' is the technical criterion of highest importance - subcriteria A, B, & C are of equal importance, followed in level of importance by subcriteria, D & E which are of equal importance - followed in level of importance by;
- (2) Criterion II 'Past Performance' followed in level of importance by;
- (3) Criterion III 'Quality Management Plan'.

The following adjectival ratings were used in the evaluation of all technical criterion other than Past Performance:

Combined Technical/Risk Rating	
Rating	Description
Outstanding	Proposal meets requirements and indicates an exceptional approach and understanding of the requirements. Strengths far outweigh any weaknesses. Risk of unsuccessful performance is very low.
Good	Proposal meets requirements and indicates a thorough approach and understanding of the requirements. Proposal contains strengths which outweigh any weaknesses. Risk of unsuccessful performance is low.
Acceptable	Proposal meets requirements and indicates an adequate approach and understanding of the requirements. Strengths and weaknesses do not outweigh one another or will have little or no impact on contract performance. Risk of unsuccessful performance is no worse than moderate.
Marginal	Proposal does not clearly meet requirements and has not demonstrated an adequate approach and understanding of the requirements. The proposal has one or more weaknesses which are not outweighed by strengths. Risk of unsuccessful performance is high.
Unacceptable	Proposal does not meet requirements and contains one or more deficiencies. Proposal is unacceptable for purposes of an award

The following adjectival ratings were used in the evaluation of the past performance criterion:

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Performance Confidence Assessment	
Rating	Description
Substantial Confidence	Based on the offeror's recent/relevant performance record, the Government has a high expectation that the offeror will successfully perform the required effort.
Satisfactory Confidence	Based on the offeror's recent/relevant performance record, the Government has a reasonable expectation that the offeror will successfully perform the required effort.
Limited Confidence	Based on the offeror's recent/relevant performance record, the Government has a low expectation that the offeror will successfully perform the required effort.
No Confidence	Based on the offeror's recent/relevant performance record, the Government has no expectation that the offeror will be able to successfully perform the required effort.
Unknown Confidence (Neutral)	No recent/relevant performance record is available or the offeror's performance record is so sparse that no meaningful confidence assessment rating can be reasonably assigned.

A table of the adjectival rating results and proposed and evaluated costs for the proposals are set forth below:

Criterion	Relative Importance Ranking	ERG
Criterion I Technical Capability - A 'Marketing Support/Outreach'	First	(b)(5)
Criterion I Technical Capability - B 'Database and Tool Design, Development, and Maintenance'	First	
Criterion I Technical Capability - C 'Complex Data Analysis'	First	
Criterion I Technical Capability - D 'Vehicle/Fuel/Component Testing'	Second	
Criterion I Technical Capability - E 'Global Program Support'	Second	

Criterion II – ‘Past Performance’	Third	(b)(5)
Criterion III – ‘Quality Management Plan’		

	ERG
Cost	(b)(4)
Fixed Fee	
Proposed Cost Plus Fixed Fee (CPFF)	
Evaluated CPFF	(b)(5)

The IGCE for this requirement was (b)(5)

4.0 ANALYSIS OF PROPOSALS

This section provides the individual technical criterion/subcriterion ratings and the rationale for the ratings, for the offeror. The criteria are addressed in subsection groups from the most important to the grouping of least relative importance. The content in this section is based on information gathered through proposal analysis. There were no technical discussions or clarification requests made with the offeror. I determined that technical discussions/clarifications with the offeror were not necessary to make the award decision, and that the conduct of such discussions/clarifications would have added little to no value to the source selection process.

4.1 FIRST CRITERION IN RELATIVE IMPORTANCE

I. Technical Capability – A. Marketing Support/Outreach

The offeror shall demonstrate its ability to:

- perform market research to determine target audiences
- create products such as webinars, print materials, multi-media, and electronic media that will effectively communicate a message to targeted audiences
- prepare logistics for conferences, workshops, and meetings both internally and with external stakeholders
- provide helpline support and respond to general inquiries about programs

ERG was rated as Outstanding

(b)(5)

I. Technical Capability – B. Database and Tool Design, Development, and Maintenance

The offeror shall demonstrate its ability to design, create, and maintain complex databases and SmartWay environmental performance assessment tools using products such as MS-Excel, Visual Basic, Oracle, and Cold Fusion, including the ability to provide backup services in case of disaster recovery. Links to online locations where these products can be viewed are encouraged. The offeror shall describe its process for testing its tools and databases prior to submission to ensure that they are as error-free as possible. The offeror shall demonstrate its approach to maintaining up-to-date knowledge of technologies and ability to convert existing tools/databases to more advanced technologies/platforms.

ERG was rated	(b)(5)	
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(b)(5)

I. Technical Capability – C. Complex Data Analysis

The offeror shall demonstrate its ability to complete complex environmental/fuel savings data analyses such as cost analyses, determining the effectiveness of current and future emission reduction programs, case study analyses, vehicle/component/fuel test analyses, etc. The offeror shall demonstrate a general familiarity with EPA's current and future MOVES models as well as other transportation/emission models, including international models. Offeror shall demonstrate its ability to verify its analysis and provide comprehensive reports of its analytical findings.

ERG was rated Outstanding

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

4.2 CRITERION IN SECOND LEVEL OF RELATIVE IMPORTANCE:**I. Technical Capability – D. Vehicle/Fuel/Component Testing**

The offeror shall demonstrate its ability to:

- provide testing services for various vehicle types, including heavy-duty, along with add-on component and assorted fuel testing
- test both on-the-road and in-lab vehicles on dynamometers under various conditions (e.g., temperature, wind resistance, load, etc.).
- clearly document all of its testing methodologies, its use of verifiable testing methods, and its quality assurance processes for testing

ERG was rated as

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

II. Technical Capability – E. Global Program Support

The offeror shall demonstrate its ability to:

- work with international programs such as SmartWay in Canada and Mexico, and in other global markets
- analyze different world transportation modes and conditions that impact global transportation and emissions factors
- translate various documents, data, etc. into other languages and for other cultures.

ERG was rated (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

4.3 CRITERION IN THIRD LEVEL OF RELATIVE IMPORTANCE:**II. Past Performance**

For both the offeror and any proposed subcontractors for subcontracts expected to exceed \$1,000,000, demonstrated performance on all, or at least three (3) contracts and subcontracts completed in the last five (5) years, and all contracts and subcontracts currently in process, which are similar in nature (size, type, and technical scope) to this requirement. Areas of demonstrated performance include: quality of product or service; timeliness of performance; cost control; business relations; and compliance with subcontracting goals.

ERG was rated as (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

4.4 CRITERION IN FOURTH LEVEL OF RELATIVE IMPORTANCE

III. Quality Management Plan

Demonstrated quality of the offeror's plan to effectively manage the quality assurance (QA) activities of the contract, including the completeness and relevance of offeror's QMP for meeting the QA requirements as described under the RFP, Section E clause FAR 52.246-11, "Higher Level Contract Quality Requirements (Government Specifications)" and in the Section L provision, EPA-L-46-101, "Instructions for the Preparation of A Quality Management Plan."

ERG was rated (b)(5)

(b)(5)

5.0 SUMMARY COMPARISON OF PROPOSALS AND RATIONALE FOR AWARD

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(b)(5)

6.0 COST REALISM

(b)(5)

7.0 PRICE REASONABLENESS

(b)(5)

8.0 OTHER AREAS

A. Responsibility

(b)(5)

B. Government Furnished Property/Equipment/Facilities

None provided.

C. Method of Payment

Standard provisional payments will be made upon receipt of invoices to reflect payment of costs incurred and fee based on actual costs and expended LOE supported by invoices.

D. EEO Clearance

(b)(5)

E. VETS-4212

(b)(5)

F. Representations and Certifications

(b)(5)

G.**H. Conflict Of Interest Plan**

(b)(5)

I. Subcontracting Plan

(b)(5)

9.0 CONCLUSION

A. I am certain that the proposal evaluation process was properly handled with compliance to the evaluation criteria. In addition, I am equally confident that the proposal review process was conducted thoroughly and completely, with the utmost integrity of the personnel involved, and in complete accord with the non-disclosure agreements signed by these same personnel.

B. I have reviewed the technical evaluation team report, the contractors' past performance information, and the proposals. My decision was based on a review of the documents, discussions with advisors and technical team personnel, a cost analysis, and an

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assessment of the proposal against the RFP evaluation criteria. I highly considered the evaluation reports and the information provided to me from the technical evaluation team; however, the award decision represents my own independent judgment of an assessment of the technical information, and the cost or pricing information.

- C. I agree with the overall technical evaluation and ratings provided by the technical evaluation team.
- D. I have reviewed the cost realism analysis contained in this decision document. There were no adjustments calculated for ERG.
- E. ERG has a highly rated technical proposal at a fair and reasonable price. I have found ERG to be responsible in accordance with the RFP. In addition, there are no other known factors which would preclude award to ERG.
- F. It is the Source Selection Authority's determination to award the resulting contract to ERG. The proposed cost-plus-fixed fee of (b)(4),(b)(5) is fair and reasonable based on adequate price competition, supplemented by favorable results from thorough proposal analysis as documented in this decision document. ERG has submitted a highly rated technical proposal at a fair and reasonable and realistic cost. I determine ERG's proposal represents the best value to the Government.

SOURCE SELECTION DETERMINATION
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RECOMMEND BY:

Candice Charlton, Contract Specialist

REVIEWED BY:

Matt Gowney, Contracting Officer

APPROVED BY:

Kathy Roe, Source Selection Official